

Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Celebration Commission Meeting

Wednesday July 22, 2015

Commission Members: Barbara Fuqua, Nicole Griffin, David Hummons, Lily Kleinlein

Associates: Dan Enslow **Staff:** Michael Shermis

The meeting began at 5:32.

Minutes: David made a motion to approve the June minutes, Barbara seconded, all approved.

Treasurer Report: Michael updated that the total is the same as last month: \$5,422.20.

Old Business:

Newsletter Feature Volunteer: Nicole volunteered to be the next featured member. David said he will volunteer in the fall.

New Business:

Power of Words/Wisdom Circles: Michael shared several updates about the two projects:

Power of Words: The speakers for Power of Words are not going to be able to speak to local HS students due to a tight travel schedule and instead will only be able to do the actual event. The event will be free but tickets are required and limited to 2 per person. IU Auditorium has a plan that includes staggered blocks of ticket availability:

1. The community will get a large block of tickets, available July 31-August 31. There will be segments of the block reserved for special groups (i.e. Fairview and Tri North).
2. On September 1 and 2 they will open another block to IU students, staff, and faculty. If the community tickets don't "sell out" in August, they will roll into the IU Block. After Sept. 2, remaining tickets will be open to anyone but they anticipate selling out before then.
3. Finally, there will be a small block of tickets available day-of as well as filling in any open spaces from no-shows. These will go to people who wait in line that day to get a last minute ticket.

The reception is limited to 200 guests and costs \$65 (Friends of Library benefits). The City is a sponsor and gets 4 tickets (Beverly and Michael will go because they are on the steering committee, the other 2 go to the Commission). If more than 2 commissioners want to attend, we can contact Michael (there may be a possibility for more or we may have to purchase on our own).

Wisdom Circles: The IDS contacted Michael about writing a story about Wisdom Circles. So far, the city, the library, and SSCAP are all hosting circles, but no details regarding dates, facilitators, or topics have been decided. Several people reached out to Michael with regrets that they won't be able to host a circle due to timing issues.

Theme/Speaker: Nicole shared the update that Brittany Packnett is interested in being our 2016 speaker. She seems to have a really good understanding of the legacy of Dr. King as well as the current climate. She seems comfortable speaking with a diverse group. Nicole thinks she would be a unique option and would add a dynamic we haven't had before. Michael says the words "up and comer" don't even do her justice. He feels like we are getting someone who is going to be a big deal in the near future. She is asking \$3,000. David asked if we should ask to go lower but Michael feels like it is a completely fair rate. He is going to look into DEMA, School of Ed, Ivy Tech, and other sponsors. She's

willing to do more than the night of (breakfast, meet with students, etc...) Barbara thinks it sounds great. She's involved with Black Lives Matter and Nicole said we have several at IU involved with that and she could really give them a lot of ideas for moving forward. Several said that we would attract youth with this type of speaker. Lily said she thinks it would be a missed opportunity to pass on the chance for a speaker who can address the current events and issues in such a relevant way. Michael said she has a wide range of speaking points and is open to working with us to narrow down a theme. Barbara made a motion to select Brittany Packnett as our 2016 speaker for \$3,000 plus expenses (travel, lodging, meals). David seconded, all approved. Michael will begin contracting with her.

2016 Event Planning: Now that we've chosen a speaker we can start to work on the contest, musical performances, and other aspects of the event. Nicole asked if we should get a quote for catering. Michael will check in with One World. Diane said via email that she spoke with Dr. Mumford and he is interested in being a part of our event, but others were hesitant to make an official offer. We had already arranged 2-3 other musical performers and there is some question over whether his health will allow him to perform. Michael was asked to remind us all that commissioners should not extend an invitation on behalf of the commission, but should explore all options through our liaison.

Grant Application/Agreements: We discussed that commissioners should not make offers, speak on behalf of the commission, or move forward with any fundraising or grants without going through our staff liaison (Michael). There was an issue with another commission in which a grant was mishandled due to a misunderstanding of the rules, so it was asked that liaisons remind commissioners of the rules regarding official communications on behalf of the city.

Michael suggested we consider applying for new forms of grant funding to go toward community projects. He's had some communications with the Community Foundation that hinted that they may be reviewing funding to certain groups. In the past we've gotten \$12,000 from the Foundation. He thinks it would be wise to be prepared with other sources of funding that would be compatible with Service for Peace. We reviewed a mini grant option Michael brought from Serve Indiana. David made a motion that we pursue other grant options to fund volunteer service projects, specifically the Serve Indiana grant that we reviewed, in addition to our normal resources to ensure that we have adequate funds for our projects. Barbara seconded, all approved.

Liaison Reports:

Commission on the Status of Black Males: They are focusing on minority health in the coming year. They are still searching for mentors for Big Brothers Big Sisters to work with minority youth.

NAACP: Michael presented a Freedom Fund Banquet fundraising letter sent from Debra Vance and the NAACP. Nicole suggested we take out an ad highlighting our 2016 speaker and event. David motioned that we support NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet Souvenir Booklet by purchasing a Full Page ad at \$135 plus corresponding design costs, to highlight our January event and speaker. Barbara seconded, all approved.

Announcements: Dan Enslow shared that the local AME church is planning a movie screening and discussion on race relations. David suggested we hold a collaborative event with the AME church and/or other groups throughout the year. He said these events could focus on a variety of topics and might take on the form of a movie screening, a panel discussion, or a Q+A, but that we could build a dialogue on how to move forward together. He said that steps are being made to change things legally, but

posed the question of how we can move forward in a way that changes people's hearts regarding race and civil rights. Dan agreed that we should keep the energy of Power of Words moving by hosting more events. He mentioned that the Monroe County Religious Leaders Organization is working on a collaboration about improving dialogue and civil discourse

Nicole said that the local AME church did a great job with acknowledging the Charleston shooting in a meaningful way. She thinks that Rev. Laffoon would do a great job facilitating a discussion after a movie screening or other event. She noted that in the aftermath of the tragedy, people seemed to appreciate the experience of coming together and connecting with others. David and Dan agreed and said that it is important that we come together regularly and not just in the aftermath of tragedy.

Nicole asked if we would want to continue this discussion at a future meeting and we all said yes.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 6:29.